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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9892
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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 000664

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/S - BRIAN WALCH

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [CG](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: DEMARCHE DELIVERED: SADC ATTENTION TO ZIMBABWE
GLOBAL POLITICAL AGREEMENT

REF: STATE 70664

Classified By: Ambassador William J. Garvelink for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) On July 9 DCM and acting polcouns delivered demarche per instructions reftel to Raymond Tshibanda, Minister of International and Regional Cooperation. Tshibanda acknowledged USG concerns over SADC's role in the Global Political Agreement (GPA), noting that the GPA had already produced results and that although the problem facing the two sides was "complex" neither side wanted the process to fail. He said the DRC had been engaged on this issue as vice president of SADC and, after its assumption of the SADC Presidency, would remain seized and would, consistent with its role as president, become more active. Tshibanda said the DRC will pursue active if low profile "consultative engagement" between the GPA parties. He added that a major goal of the process should be the eventual lifting of sanctions to benefit the Zimbabwean people.

¶2. (C) Comment: Tshibanda confirmed that his office will have lead responsibility for coordination on SADC issues once the DRC assumes SADC's rotational presidency in September at the body's Ordinary Summit in Kinshasa and noted that planning is underway for that event. His familiarity with and engagement on SADC questions was apparent, as was a recognition of USG concern on the GPA implementation status. His focused and measured responses augur well for an active DRC presidency of SADC, not only because of mastery of SADC issues but also because, as President Joseph Kabila's former chief of staff, he probably has the president's confidence (Note: not only was Tshibanda Kabila's chief of staff, he is the president's choice to chair the GDRC commission negotiating domestic armed groups' integration into the national army. End note). We do not, however, believe Tshibanda or the GDRC will change the substance of its Zimbabwe policy, which is to refrain from criticizing Robert Mugabe, an African liberation leader who also supported Kabila's father, Laurent Kabila, in the war against Rwanda and Uganda. End comment.
GARVELINK